

Message Text

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67

ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN:DLAZAR:PW

APPROVED BY ARA:JBKUBISCH

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMCONSUL BELIZE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 135841

GUATEMALA FOR ROCAP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, HO

SUBJECT: BATRES-KUBISCH MEETING

1. IN A BRIEF MEETING MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 24, WHICH HAD BEEN REQUESTED BY BATRES, HE EXPLAINED TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY KUBISCH THE CURRENT POSITION OF HONDURAS WITH RESPECT TO THE EL SALVADOR DISPUTE AND THE POSITION HE INTENDED TO TAKE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN ON MONDAY AFTERNOON.

2. BATRES RECOUNTED BRIEFLY THE NEGOTIATING HISTORY STARTING WITH THE MEXICO CITY MEETING IN DECEMBER 1973. HE STATED THAT THE FREQUENT BUILD-UP AND SUBSEQUENT FRUSTRATION OF EXPECTATIONS WAS, IN ITSELF, HAVING A NEGATIVE EFFECT PSYCHOLOGICALLY IN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE INDICATED THAT EVERY TIME ONE OF THE NEGOTIATING SESSIONS FAILED
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HONDURAN PUBLIC OPINION BECAME THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT

WITH RESPECT TO FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS. HE ALSO SAID THAT PEOPLE ON THE BORDER WHO ALWAYS FEAR THAT WAR IS IMMINENT, PACK THEIR BELONGINGS AND LEAVE EACH TIME A HIGHLY PUBLICIZED NEGOTIATING SESSION BREAKS DOWN AND POINTED OUT THAT FOLLOWING THE FAILURE OF THE LAST JALAPA MEETING TO TAKE PLACE, THE RUMORS OF WAR EVEN REACHED THE UNITED STATES NEWSPAPERS.

3. BATRES EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION OF THE REASONS FOR UNITED STATES UNWILLINGNESS TO INTERVENE IN THE

SITUATION BUT ASKED OUR SUPPORT IN THE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN TO PIN EL SALVADOR (WHICH HE PICTURED AS HAVING DELAYED AND EVADED NEGOTIATIONS AT EVERY POINT) DOWN TO A DATE AND FIRM BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. HE MADE THE POINT THAT HONDURAS STANDS READY, AS IT ALWAYS HAS IN THE PAST, TO ENTER INTO SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS BUT THAT IF IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR EL SALVADOR TO DO SO--AND HE MADE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE BORDER DEFINITION QUESTION--THEN IT WOULD BE BETTER TO STATE PUBLICLY THAT NO FURTHER PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME. HE REPEATED THAT THIS CLARIFICATION WOULD BE BETTER THAN THE CONSTANT FRUSTRATION OF THE HOPES THAT ARISE EVERY TIME NEGOTIATIONS ARE ANNOUNCED.

4. ASSISTANT SECRETARY KUBISCH EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR BATRES' VISIT AND THE UNITED STATES UNDERSTANDING OF HONDURAS' POINT OF VIEW AND OF OUR AFFECTION FOR THE HONDURAN PEOPLE. MR. KUBISCH RESTATED THE U.S. POSITION OF CONCERN REGARDING THIS MATTER BOTH AS IT AFFECTED TWO FRIENDLY COUNTRIES AND AS IT AFFECTED THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMON MARKET AND TO THAT EXTENT THE WHOLE FUTURE OF LATIN AMERICA. HE REITERATED OUR WILLINGNESS TO HELP IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE THAT WOULD NOT INVOLVE PUTTING THE U.S.G. IN THE MIDDLE BETWEEN TWO FRIENDLY COUNTRIES. HE PROMISED TO DISCUSS THE HONDURAN POSITION WITH THE U.S. OAS DELEGATION.

5. IN ACCOMPANYING BATRES FROM THE MEETING DEPARTMENT OFFICER ASKED HIM WHETHER A PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT NO FURTHER PROGRESS WAS POSSIBLE AT THIS POINT WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCEPTABLE POLITICALLY IN HONDURAS. HE SAID IF IT WAS INEVITABLE, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE ACCEPTABLE. DEPARTMENT OFFICER MADE THE POINT THAT THE INEVITABLE IS NOT ALWAYS ACCEPTABLE AND ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF SUCH A POSITION WERE ANNOUNCED. BATRES RESPONDED WE WOULD ALL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE BUT THAT HE HOPED SUCH AN EVENTUALITY COULD BE AVOIDED. KISSINGER

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